

TO: COM-FSM Board of Regents

FROM: Resida S. Keller, Faculty/Staff Senate President



Date: February 17, 2012

SUBJECT: Clarification on Salary Pay Freeze

Dear Chairperson Mida and Regents of the COM-FSM Board:

I am writing this letter in my capacity as the Faculty/Staff senate President to request for clarification and more information regarding the recently approved pay freeze that will go into effect during the FY 2013. We understand the financial situation that the college is facing and know that such decisions must be made to ensure the sustainability of the college. Our aim in writing this letter is not that we wish (nor are we able to) to change what has already been approved, but that we work together to ensure that there is transparency and open communication when such important decisions are made on behalf of all college employees in the future.

The concern of the Faculty/Staff senate is that most of the employees were unaware of this decision and felt that they should have been informed and consulted. Although the decision-making process for the budget is usually the responsibility of a few members of the college, including the heads of offices, campuses and departments, when decisions that will directly affect all college members are needed to be made, these members need to be informed, consulted and allowed to voice their concerns. This is what we hope will happen in the future.

Our immediate concern now is that because of this decision to freeze step increases in the upcoming year, we know that this will greatly affect the college's ability to attract and retain quality employees, especially faculty to the college. As faculty/Staff senate representatives, we ask that you address questions that have arisen in response to the changes that we are to be facing. We need answers as it is also our ethical responsibility to be able to answer prospective employees as best we can regarding the college's financial situation.

We would like to request that you provide for the senate a response in writing, answers to the following questions prior to your next meeting:

1. Will this pay freeze be only for the FY 2013 or is this to be a permanent situation?
2. If and when this salary freeze ends, will the salaries of employees move up to the step/level that they would have been at (making up for the period that their pay was frozen) or will their salaries move from where it is now currently, with no compensation for the years when the salaries were frozen?
3. What steps can be taken to ensure that employees will be consulted when such decisions are to be made in the future?
4. When hiring new employees, what will we be expected to tell them with regards to the college's financial situation presently?

The Faculty/Staff senate feels that it is our responsibility to be able to provide those whom we represent the answers needed so that they can be able to make the best decisions for themselves while employed here at the college. We also feel that transparency and participation from all college community members at all levels is needed if shared governance at the college is to be achieved.

We look forward to hearing your responses to our questions and we know that despite the financial hardships that the college is facing, there is still and will always be a need for open communication between you, our leaders and us, your constituents. Thank you for your *attention to our concerns and questions and we look forward to working with you all, together, for a better future for this college.*